

ADRIANA PROGANÓ
10.11.2018 | 29.12.2018

GARDEN

Archery has long been an exercise for the body and spirit of archers. However, there are many ways and many purposes behind archery practice. Adriana Proganó has her own way of doing it.

The archery we all know, mainly from watching it on television rather than practicing it, will serve as a comparison model for us to approach these works. In our effort to experience and understand, the intention is to get to that "particular way" of A.P. to practice her archery. We're using metaphors, of course! But with their help we hope to get into her work.

Soft arrows cannot be confused with those other precision-like arrows created for the "professional" archer, whether that archer is a warrior of the past or a current sportsman that uses them in specific situations. These works place us in another world, or in another dimension of our world, or maybe we are actually seeing a new and actual aspect of our world. Not being able to solve all these questions, we can still ask: what world is this?

Let us return to our metaphor. The target is not an "ideal", more or less transcendental, to which a practice would aspire. The aim or the purpose here is perhaps a "performative" goal: to rehearse a surface life form – an exercise of fruition and freedom of the self and the relationship with the world – through artistic production. Some disconcert, some disturbance or even a certain disorientation the spectator may initially experience (encountering these works) are experiences that indicate the passage from a more familiar world to enter the one presented here by A.P. Thus, the target also doesn't provide a central focus on perception and action, with its usual hierarchical concentric circles, but it's off centre and the circles (des) organize themselves unsystematically and heterogeneously.

The soft arrows are an allegory to help us see and understand what is happening here, they are the image of the means suitable to a practical process of experimental nature, which associates a form of production with a way of life; in short, a process that is not subordinated to an external purpose. Which processes of experimentation arise in these works? Let us risk synthesizing the diversity of the practised procedures in a single word: rehearse. The chosen word has several senses, immediate significant resonances: to fantasize (as an act of specific imagination that mixes the interior with the exterior), to costume (in a kind of cosplay), to experience (in the double sense of trying: testing, as doing experiments, and also savouring, as in wine tasting), staging (playing with and making her colourful "toys", and also in the sense of producing objects and images, objects-images for a scene as if they were stage props) ... We enumerated already several senses of this "rehearsal", we lack others, but above all, we lack the most stressed sense: to try (as in the championships in which there are several "rehearsals" of shooting).

Here, to try is an artistic procedure and an existential gesture. It is an action forever provisional, sometimes even improvised, using what's available at the time and in that place, markedly contingent, and rejecting the whole idea but also the full weight of any definitive and final solution. Trying is also a particular learning process – practical and existential. Trying, refuses the hierarchy in the "transmission of knowledge" (refusing both the master and the disciple) and rejecting the relationship between them based on the transmission of "heritable" and "cultural" knowledge. Here, what

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can be learned trying is asserted. Trying also refuses "professional qualification" (i.e., at once, it refuses both the pre-defined collective path for forming a certain knowledge with its sequential steps and specialization as craft and knowledge). Try. To try is perhaps the only iron rule regularly followed by A.P. in these works: because it's the rule that opens more possibilities for action. Therefore, we cannot impose on these works the criteria and concepts foreign to this way of doing, of feeling and of living. How can trying be excluded in the name of an external "unity" or "progression" of work? How can trying be excluded in the name of a hypothetical "unity" of style or identity? Try...

In all these works (but also in others not exhibited here) some common traits stand out. Let us begin with the most immediately incisive aspect: there is a joyfully "coloured" imagery, a heterogeneous imagery that imposes and exposes itself, a recognizable imagery. It combines Eastern and Western recollections and references, juvenile or historical and mainly media references. In this case, we can hardly talk about artistic influences. Although collecting, referring and using these "materials" they do not appear in the works as citations, appropriations or even allusions. Perhaps A.P. can say as Adília Lopes: "my work is others," but with the supplementary innocence of "others" being only and also her work. Everything becomes, perhaps, innocently and joyfully not conscious. That is why we can use great authors as touchstone to understand these works but freed from their "solemn majesty", or even the obligations to their greatness: we remember Basquiat and his relation with the immediate and daily life, the pop and expressionist contributions of his life; we think of the time and movement dynamics of a Francis Bacon, as well as his space-frames; we (probably) allude to the ways of organizing perspective of Chinese painting, or to Clement.

The second aspect to consider, that relates to the previous one, is the aesthetic construction: the type of line and stain, the way the image is organized. We will try again to identify common procedures in the different works. The line is, above all, a contour-gestural line, oscillating between the delimitative commitment of representation and, sometimes, freeing itself from its representative purpose, assuming the role of a calligraphic inscription. But what characterizes it more markedly is to be a contour-gesture, a simplified round gesture, accentuated when a human figure is represented and levelled in practically all other recognizable elements. The stain, sometimes blurred, is used as colour-fill, choosing by its application within a space the larger contour line. The transitions between figuration and abstraction result from the liberation of the gesture, sometimes introducing rhythms and times that escape the limit of the contour or, when free from this contour task, generating spaces of colour. The whole spaces result from the composition of heterogeneous planes – often multiple perspectives, different depth and verticality – that communicate with each other through transitions or floating overlaps. There is always colour, clear and cheerful, as in the colouring books of children...

These works allow the viewer, who gives himself the freedom to try to experience them, a formidable trip to another world – that of Adriana Proganó – that after all is also a part of ours.

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